

Dear Branch Secretary, I enclose a copy of the I.B.R.S. newsletter. I hope you will find it possible to duplicate it and issue a copy to each of your members, active & not. May I remind you about membership renewal registration and the need to have resolutions for conference in at an early date. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours with Best Wishes

Kathleen Lingle

P.S. Sorry about delay. Internal Coordinator. Many contributory factors. unlikely to recur.

I.B.R.G.

Newsletter — Samhain / Nollaig 1983

* A message from the National Chairman, Mr. Jim King. *

Dear Members,

As you are aware I.B.R.G. is now just two years old and I am sure that you will agree that we have achieved much in that short period, thanks to your help and support.

During our first year our strategy was to establish as many branches as possible as quickly as possible. Did you know that at times we established a new branch every three weeks? The policy of rapid expansion worked well so that by the end of 1983 we had a branch in nearly every major city in England and Wales.

Because of this success and the lack of a mature organisation behind us many organisational and constitutional problems began to appear. However, we are now beginning to come to grips with these problems and, I believe, they can and will be eliminated if the good will to do so is held by all members of the organisation.

This year we have tried to promote I.B.R.G. at all levels.

As I read the 'Irish Post' letters page and sort my daily mail I am delighted to be able to report that the Irish community now sees us as the premier group representing their interests. We are also accepted as a representative group by the Irish political parties, the Irish Embassy, local authorities, education authorities, etc.

The often hesitant British Press and Television have begun to take notice and appreciate some of our views and a number of M.P.s and M.E.P.s have joined our still growing organisation.

All this and more has been achieved in two short years.

Next year we must try to further professionalize I.B.R.G. and to attract more second and subsequent generation Irish into the organization. Since the second generation now comprises some two thirds of our community it is important that we should have their voice represented to a similar degree in the decision making bodies of I.B.R.G. Furthermore, if we are to represent the Irish Community and articulate its views and needs to government departments, education authorities, our Embassy, and so on, it is important that we do so in a professional manner. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to attract more professional people into the organisation.

It is equally important that we hear the voice of branches not represented on the N.E.C. Perhaps each branch should be represented — what do you think?

To conclude I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support and assistance you have given during the past two years and I look forward to meeting many of you again at our National Conference in March 1984.

Every good wish and a Merry Christmas to all.

Is mise le meas,

Jim King

National Chairman.

Dear Member,

In this first newsletter perhaps I may be allowed to put forward some of my own ideas about its function.

To me the primary purpose of the newsletter is to act as a link between branches so that every member may have a voice in the democratic development of our organisation. It can also be one factor in ensuring that I.B.R.G. members speak as one on those occasions when one clear voice is louder and more effective than the clamour of unorganised thousands.

Individual initiative will always have an important part to play when it acts within the constitution and in accord with our accepted aims and objectives but isolated actions can be divisive. Local needs are best met by local responses, but by sharing successful responses with other branches we shall be helping each other in a most positive way. So let me have news of your activities and achievements as well as minutes of your meetings. A minute might record a successful approach to your local authority but details of how that approach was made might help another branch with a problem.

This newsletter will also publicise any future events you may be planning. (see Dates for Your Diary). The newsletter will be a bi-monthly publication and any item for inclusion in the next issue should reach me by January 15th. I hope to have the next issue out to branches by the first week in February.

I should be interested to receive for possible publication letters from individual members. These should be sent via the writer's branch secretary so that good faith may be assured.

MEMBERSHIP May I remind branches that the membership renewal date is January 1st. Membership fee remains £1. Fifty pence is retained by the branch and the fifty pence together with the member's signature on a membership form should be sent to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary - Mr. P. Browne.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR BRANCH IS DULY REGISTERED IN TIME TO

A) SEND RESOLUTIONS [IN January]

B) SEND DELEGATES

to
the Annual National Conference [IN MARCH]
The Registration requirements are:

a) Names and addresses of officers to
P. BROWNE (see above)

b) Minutes of meetings to Internal Co-ordinator.
Kathleen Wright

One other word about membership. Has your branch had a membership campaign lately? What does your branch do about publicity? Please let me know. Other branches might profit from your ideas and experience.

The Media

i) Monitoring It has been decided to co-ordinate the I.B.R.G.'s attempts at monitoring press references to Ireland and the Irish so that effective action can be taken against offensive passages.

The following lines of action have been agreed by the N.E.C.:-

i) National Press - A Fleet St. branch has been set up for this purpose. Any branch finding a paragraph or article or advertisement or cartoon in the National press offensive should refer the matter to P. Delaney.

ii) Local Press - Local branches are responsible for taking appropriate action when called for in their own areas but are asked to send details of the offensive passage with name, publishers and date of issue of the paper to Pat Delaney at the above address so that all incidents of racist journalism may be recorded.

In this way the problem will be attacked on two fronts, via the editor and Press Council and by M.P.s. in the House of Commons when necessary.

Television and Radio will also be monitored.

Again contact the P.R.O. P. Delaney [As above].

2. A Positive Approach To The Media

i) There is a feeling that I.B.R.G. should have its own weekly radio and television time. It is proposed to set up a working party to investigate the possibilities. Have you the necessary expertise? Are you willing to serve on the working party? Names please to the National Secretary:-
Judy Puddle

If such time were granted what sort of Irish programmes would you want? Again ideas please to Judy Puddle.

Here I might mention that Manchester I.B.R.G. have succeeded in getting regular time on Radio Manchester. I hope to publish an article by the presenters in a future issue.

ii) Could you persuade your local paper to have a regular 'Irish Affairs' column written by an I.B.R.G. member.

If we can work in this way monitoring and attacking racist journalism and at the same time making positive statements in an interesting way progress should be rapid.

Funding The N.E.C. As the organization grows in numbers and in influence so do the demands made on the N.E.C. Some members have spent large amounts

[Funding cont.]

of their own money in order that I.B.R.G. may continue to function. This cannot go on, not because the N.E.C. members are unwilling to pay out anymore but because an important principle is at stake here. People with talent must not be prevented from standing for office because they cannot afford to subsidize I.B.R.G. to the tune of £x for postage, paper, telephone bills, printing, photo-copying etc.

Therefore, The N.E.C. propose holding a national draw in 1984. Every branch is asked to help provide a prize of sufficient value to attract a large sale of £1 tickets. Perhaps you have contacts with some Irish firm in your area; can they help? Could your branch give the price of two return tickets on the B-I Ferry. Ideas and offers please to Mike Forde [redacted]
M/c. S.

We hope the draw will be a great success but it will take a time to organise and the need for funds could become urgent. [For example the cost of booking suitable premises for an annual conference can be several hundred pounds] [The N.E.C. does not have several hundred pounds]. Can your branch give some immediate help. Perhaps you could send a donation to P. Browne right away. Perhaps you will pledge a percentage of monies raised at your next social event. What about a local draw for a more modest prize and at a more modest price than the national one?

Youth Membership Mike Forde is anxious that each branch should make a special effort to attract Irish youth into I.B.R.G. Could your branch organize a local survey of numbers of Irish youth in your area? What are their interests? How can I.B.R.G. satisfy their needs and give opportunities for young people of 1st, 2nd or 3rd Irish generations to recognise and express their Irish identity. Ideas please and information if you have it about successes in this area to Mike Forde [address as above]

Nuclear Pollution in the Irish Sea The N.E.C. meeting in Bolton on the 26.11.83 passed a resolution expressing concern about the increase in nuclear pollution in the Irish Sea because of effluent from Sellafield in Cumbria. Letters demanding action were sent to British Nuclear Fuels, The Minister of the Environment and to the Irish Ambassador.

We ask you to write similar letters to your M.P. and get others to do the same. If your branch sends a letter from I.B.R.G. you can still write individually as well. Visit your M.P. when next he holds a political surgery in the area.

Dates For Your Diary

Saturday February 11th 1984 Conference - Irish Dimensions in British Education.

Soar Valley Community College
Leicester.

Your Branch secretary should have details of this conference organised by our National Education Officer, Nessa Danaher. It is vital that this important conference is well supported by I.B.R.G. branches. Can you send a delegate? Can you publicise the conference amongst local teachers' unions, education committee, Community Relations Officers, Governing bodies of schools and colleges and Parents Associations.

Date Saturday Feb 11th 1984

Place Soar Valley Community College Leicester

Theme Irish Dimensions in British Education.

Cost £4.00.

Th. Sat. Sun - 10th, 11th, 12th August 1984 Irish Festival in Bolton.

Music, Dancing, Sport, Book Displays, Trade Displays.
More details later but keep the dates free.
If you wish to take part contact F. O'Kelly.
[redacted] A. Devlin [redacted]

Do send details of any event you wish publicized in this newsletter in good time.

The Next Issue of the Newsletter Please send items for inclusion in good time and great quantity. Perhaps we shall get an article in Irish. Any offers?